

A TRIBUTE TO SONDRA MILLER

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 13, 1999

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my great admiration for Judge Sondra Miller, an extraordinary jurist and community leader who will be honored with the Diane White "Advocate for Women's Justice" Award on October 28th.

Judge Miller has enjoyed a remarkable career in the law. Currently an Associate Justice of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, she has previously served as a Justice of the Supreme Court for the Ninth Judicial District, and as a Family Court Judge in Westchester County.

Judge Miller has also lent her energy and expertise to a great number of organizations which support our legal system and advance the values of a strong society. Her expertise and commitment to women and children has been especially inspiring. Judge Miller has been the Co-Chair of the New York State Task Force on Family Violence, the Founder of Judges and Lawyers Breast Cancer Alert, and a Commissioner of the Governor's Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children, among many other volunteer posts.

To each challenge, Judge Miller brings a keen legal mind, a genuine devotion to our system of law, and a determination to seek justice. It is no wonder that she has been recognized repeatedly by her peers, receiving honors such as the Westchester Woman of the Year Award, the Founders Award from the Woman's Bar Association of the State of New York, and the New York State Bar Association Howard A. Levine Award for Outstanding Work in the Area of Children and the Law.

Judge Miller's commitment to the law is matched by an equally powerful devotion to the larger community. She has been active in a wide variety of organizations, ranging from the League of Women Voters, to Hadassah, to Planned Parenthood. In each case, Judge Miller has earned the respect and admiration of friends and associates.

In short, Judge Miller is a trail-blazer whose work and personal example have made a difference to countless Americans, and who continues to offer the very highest quality of personal and professional service.

I am proud to join in recognizing Judge Sondra Miller and confident that she will remain a leading light for many years to come.

ADDRESS BY H.E. LENNART MERI, PRESIDENT OF ESTONIA

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 13, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following for the RECORD.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

ADDRESS BY H.E. LENNART MERI, PRESIDENT OF ESTONIA, AT THE BREAKFAST OF THE JOINT BALTIC AMERICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE HONORING THE MEMBERS OF THE BALTIC CAUCUS OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 13, 1999—WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. Chairman, Members of Congress, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I appreciate being here in this very distinguished company. I appreciate the opportunity to address this distinguished audience here today and I will do so in a triple capacity: as an Estonian, as a representative of the Baltic states, and as European. I will focus on the challenge of NATO enlargement to the Baltic states, but I will do so in the context of the evolving European-U.S. relationship and of the situation in and the relationship with the Russian Federation.

The world today is changing, and it should be our joint endeavor to change it in a way, which promotes our common interests. These interests include, both as far as Estonia and the U.S. are concerned, a stable and secure Europe and a stable, secure, democratic and cooperative Russia. The question is how to achieve these two aims. I will present to you my case that, including the Baltic States in NATO can actually contribute to both.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the security relationship between the US and Europe is changing and evolving. What is not and what should not change is the American commitment to European security. After all, for forty years it was the United States presence in Europe that guaranteed safety and freedom to the non-communist part of the continent. Even in countries that were not and are not members of NATO it is generally acknowledged today that their safety was a consequence of the United States military presence in Europe. For all the manpower and military hardware that the European NATO members themselves put up it was essential for America to be ever-present and ready to support and lead the defense of western Europe, should it come to that. Today, the security situation has altered drastically. In this situation it is clear that we Europeans have to do more and that we have to be better prepared to manage crises on our own doorstep to be a more partner to the United States.

The contrary, the US presence in Europe is today as vital as it has ever been. History has shown that the United States will be involved, sooner or later, in a European conflict. This is a sign of our close economic ties, but it is more importantly, and I believe above all, a sign of the convictions and values we share on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Therefore we must continue to work together to strengthen and expand the still all too narrow area where democracy rules and human rights are respected. It is right of the United States to want its European partners to contribute more and it is right of the Europeans to strengthen common defense capacities. Yet all this means is that we are restructuring a successful and vital relationship. We are not—and we must not—alter the fundamental principles on which this co-operation is based, and these principles are caught up in one word: NATO. NATO is today and will remain for the foreseeable future the only organisation capable of ensuring a safe and secure Euro-Atlantic region.

Estonia and our two Baltic neighbours, Latvia and Lithuania, wish to be part of this co-operation. Or rather I should say that we are already part of it. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have been working together with

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NATO forces in Bosnia and now in Kosovo. We are exercising with US and European forces on a regular basis. In the very near future Estonian radar stations and those of our neighbours will be hooked up to NATO systems and we will start exchanging vital information.

Thus the co-operation between Estonia and NATO, between our neighbours and NATO is already happening. We have demonstrated clearly our willingness and readiness to contribute to European and Trans-Atlantic security and stability because we believe that this also affects our security. Kosovo and Bosnia were not far away events in far away places but were of direct relevance to our own national security. If one nation in Europe is not secure then no one is secure. We may be able to avoid direct conflict, but we cannot avoid refugees and disruptions in trade that result from these wars. Therefore it is in our direct national interest to contribute to European and Trans-Atlantic security, just as I am convinced that it is in the United States interest to remain engaged in Europe.

This is the reason why we wish to join NATO and this is why I believe it is also in the national interest of the United States to have the Baltic states become members of the Alliance.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is fashionable for some nowadays to speak of a realist, or neo-realist policy agenda. The argument is that what worked well until the end of the Cold War will work well today. I would be the last one to dispute that the US policies, which led to the collapse of the Soviet Union, were wrong or ineffective. On the contrary; they were right and effective. But the world of 1999 is different from the world of 1989, or 1979, 69 or 59. We no longer have the Cold War; we no longer have the Soviet Union. Instead we have a Central Europe stretching from the Gulf of Finland to the Adriatic and Black Seas that is free once more and we have a Russia which is struggling to find a democratic path. We also have an independent Ukraine, and Georgia and Azerbaijan and Armenia . . . The list goes on! And we are faced with the fact that the United States truly is the one remaining superpower.

Thus, our policy agenda today should also proceed from the fact that we face a new world, which requires new solutions. The world of tomorrow is in the process of being shaped. In shaping this world we must act with great agility and great speed. Whether we term the policies realistic or idealistic or something in between has in this case no relevance. What is required is determined action. Any other approach is, I believe, simply unrealistic.

I am convinced that the United States has a profound interest in leading this endeavour. An expanded area of democracy and freedom is in the US interest, because it increases stability. And stability in turn is a catalyst for economic development, which increases trade, and so on. And one major way of increasing stability is to continue the enlargement of NATO.

There will be those—perhaps even here, in this room—who will say that I am wrong, that continuing the enlargement of NATO will only irritate Russia, make it even harder to deal with and that for that reason NATO should not expand. Certainly not to the Baltic states.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dreams of the instant birth of a free and democratic Russia, where human rights would be respected were very popular in the West at the beginning of

this decade. We in Estonia never shared this enthusiasm. But neither do we share the gloom of many Western observers today who seem to write off Russia and to say that nothing good will ever come out of there. I believe that Russia can indeed become a truly democratic country. But it will simply take a lot of time. What Russia needs during this time of growing up is firm guidance on what is and what is not permitted in our new world.

Today we see once again the bombing of villages and the killing of civilians in Chechnya. We see the deportation of tens of thousands of persons from Moscow—simply because of the different colour of their skin. And we see worrying calls for a strong man to lead Russia. All of these symptoms give cause for concern. We must in no way nurture these trends, we must in no way give people who advocate such policies a reason to believe that they are accepted or tolerated by the West. Rather we have to support those politicians in Russia who even today are expressing reservations about the war in Chechnya and the deportation of persons because of the colour of their skin. We must nurture the democratic forces in Russia, however weak, so that Russia may one day find the political will to abandon her post-feudal way of thinking and start to build a civil society. This means supporting the Russian democrats and providing assistance, but precisely targeted assistance. It means staying engaged with Russia. It means stability around Russia will be the best way to assist her democratic forces. It also means enlarging NATO to include those countries of central Europe that wish to join, including the Baltic states.

Ladies and Gentlemen, One of the fundamental tenets of our common heritage is the promotion of the free right of men and nations to choose their destiny. It is a tenet, which underpins the international society in which we live and where we wish to live. This is the principle, which should guide us when discussing the future NATO membership of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Any word—any hint—that Russia has a say in this matter will only strengthen those in Moscow who aim to do things the old feudal way. It will strengthen those who do not wish to have Russia become a member of the democratic society of nations. It will bring us all further from the goal of enhancing the sphere of stability and security in Europe.

In short, Baltic NATO membership is in the interest of those who wish to strengthen democracy in Russia.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have approached Baltic membership in NATO from two angles: from a European and from a Russian one. Europe's role within NATO is growing and the Baltic states are committed to being part of this development. We are willing to carry our share of the burden.

On the other hand, Russia's future is only now taking shape and Baltic membership of NATO will help steer this development in the right direction.

The Baltic Caucus in the Senate and in the House and Baltic Americans are a crucial element in our strategy for gaining membership of the Alliance. It is you who are our advocates both here in Washington and across the United States. I hope that my presentation here today has further served to strengthen your resolve and has provided you with some additional ideas on this issue. I am convinced that by working together we can achieve our common goal so that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania may in the near

future join the United States as full members of NATO.

By working together, Estonia and the US, the Baltic states and the US, Europe and the US, we can ensure that our world of tomorrow will be somewhat safer, somewhat more democratic, somewhat more prosperous than the world of today.

Thank you.

TRIBUTE TO REAR ADMIRAL NORBERT R. RYAN, JR.

HON. FLOYD SPENCE
OF SOUTH CAROLINA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 13, 1999

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Rear Admiral Norbert R. Ryan, Jr., the outgoing Chief of Legislative Affairs for the U.S. Navy. During the past three years, he has proven to be an invaluable asset to the House Armed Services Committee, the House of Representatives and the Congress. It is an honor to have the opportunity to thank Rear Admiral Ryan for his dedicated service and to recognize him for his accomplishments.

A native of Mountainhome, Pennsylvania, Rear Admiral Ryan began his military career after graduating from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1967. From the beginning, Rear Admiral Ryan demonstrated his leadership skills, and in 1993 after a distinguished career as an aviator, Rear Admiral Ryan was selected for rear admiral (lower half). In 1996, Rear Admiral Ryan was selected to represent the Navy on Capitol Hill as Chief of Legislative Affairs. Given the significant changes in Navy leadership during his tenure, Rear Admiral Ryan's steadfast leadership and strategic vision may be credited with keeping the Navy's legislative strategy on course. Over the past three legislative cycles, I watched as he successfully navigated Navy leadership through difficult challenges to key naval programs including the F/A-18E/FSuperhornet, the CVN-77/ CVN(X), the DD-21, Tactical Tomahawk, Virginia Class Submarines, shipyard maintenance and the Navy's role in Kosovo.

As Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, I have had the pleasure of working closely with Norb Ryan. His success has been due in no small part to the strong relationships that he has built with Members of the House and our staffs. He enhanced these action, and established an impressive program to maximize congressional exposure to the men and women who serve in the Navy and Marine Corps.

Rear Admiral Ryan may also be credited with initiating a series of Congressional Constituent Caseworker workshops by geographical region. Today, these workshops are invaluable to Members of Congress and ensure that we have the information we need on Navy programs to respond to the concerns of our constituents.

Rear Admiral Ryan's tireless efforts throughout his distinguished career have benefited America's Navy. He is a spirited and resourceful naval officer with whom it has been a pleasure to work. I look forward to working with Norb in the future and am certain that his contributions in the years ahead will continue to benefit both the Navy and the Nation.

While his presence on Capitol Hill will be missed, Rear Admiral Ryan will be doing critically important work in his new role as Chief of Naval Personnel. I can think of few officers as well suited to leading America's navy into the new millenium. As his career sails on, I would like to send Rear Admiral Ryan the traditional Navy farewell wish—"Fair Winds and Following Seas!"

TRIBUTE TO MIKE PETRO

HON. RON PACKARD
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 13, 1999

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Firefighter Mike Petro for his dedication and service to the Orange County Fire Department. Mike Petro joined the fire service in 1984 as a volunteer fire fighter in north San Diego while he was a freshman in college. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection later hired him to be a Seasonal Firefighter. In 1989, Mike was hired as a Firefighter with the Orange County Fire Department, now the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA).

During Mike Petro's service career he has participated in and remains on several Fire Authority and County wide pre-hospital emergency care committees including: Local 3631 Pre-Hospital Care Committee, Equipment Project Team and EMS Continuous Quality Improvement Steering Committee. He has served as a Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Instructor and teaches CPR classes for the OCFA's community CPR program. Additionally, he is an Emergency Medical Technician instructor for Rancho Santiago Community College and a guest lecturer for Saddleback Community College's Paramedic program. Mike Petro has also been a Paramedic Preceptor and an assistant instructor for Career and Reserve OCFA fire fighter academies.

Mr. Speaker, firefighters provide key services in protecting communities and citizens, as well as our Nation's forests. Mike Petro has gone above and beyond the call of duty in his service to the Orange County Community. I am proud to recognize Mike Petro as Firefighter of the Year.

TRIBUTE TO ANSON COUNTY JAYCEES

HON. ROBIN HAYES
OF NORTH CAROLINA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 13, 1999

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Anson County, North Carolina chapter of the Jaycees.

The Anson County Jaycees were recognized as the number one chapter in North Carolina Jaycees Parade of Excellence.

The Jaycees are a national organization of men and women between the ages of 21-39 who want the best opportunities for leadership development, volunteerism, and community service.